DAVID SANFORD BIG BAND FEATURING HUGH RAGIN

A PRAYER FOR LESTER BOWIE

1 **Full Immersion** 12:48

Soloists: Theo Moore (congas), Jim Messbauer (trombone), Anna Webber (tenor sax), Geoff Vidal (tenor sax)

2 **Subtraf** 9:30

Soloists: Mike Christianson (trombone), Dave Fabris (guitar)

3 **Woman in Shadows** 8:01

Soloists: Ted Levine (alto sax)

4 **popit** 2:50

Soloists: Hugh Ragin (trumpet)

5 **A Prayer For Lester Bowie** 13:38

Soloists: Hugh Ragin (trumpet), Ted Levine (alto sax), Geoff Vidal (tenor sax), Marc Phaneuf (tenor sax), Mike Christianson, Mike Seltzer, Steve Gehring and Jim Messbauer (trombones)

6 **Dizzy Atmosphere** 6:29

Soloists: Wayne J. du Maine (trumpet), Brad Goode (trumpet), Marc Phaneuf (tenor sax), Dave Phillips (bass)

7 **Soldier and the CEO** 7:19

Soloists: Kelley Hart-Jenkins (alto sax), Dave Fabris (guitar), Brad Hubbard (baritone sax)

8 **V-Reel** 8:45

Soloists: Geoff Burleson (piano), Ted Levine (alto sax), Ben Herrington, (trombone)

Total time: 69:20

All music composed and arranged by David Sanford (David Sanford Music / BMI) except:
“A Prayer For Lester Bowie” composed and arranged by Hugh Ragin (HURA Music / ASCAP)
“Dizzy Atmosphere” composed by John “Dizzy” Gillespie (Universal Music Corp. / ASCAP)

“Music from a [person’s] innards will systematize that gut-bucket spillage on its own terms.” — Greg Tate

Tate’s intention was to place the guitarist Pete Cosey in the creative lineage of Cecil Taylor and Miles Davis, and we can add Lester Bowie to that canon as well. The sense of adventure in Bowie the soloist, composer and bandleader was such that the listener assumes that at any moment, truly anything could happen. The same essence of limitless possibility infuses the work of Hugh Ragin, who, as a young musician, spent ten days studying with Bowie and the Art Ensemble of Chicago at the Creative Music Studio intensive in Woodstock, NY, and in recent years he has frequently performed with the Art Ensemble and other members of the AACM.

Exactly forty years ago, when some of the earliest ideas for this band were being formed, Ragin, performing with the University of Northern Colorado’s Lab I big band, played a brief but uncommonly dramatic solo at the start of Clare Fischer’s “In the Beginning” (which also featured a very young Mike Christianson introducing his formidable Grey- and Nanton-inspired plunger technique to a wider audience). Ragin had been featured on Anthony Braxton’s *Composition 98* and Roscoe Mitchell’s *Snurdy McGurdy and her Dancin’ Shoes* at that time, and became a primary influence on the direction and ideology of the band, which would begin performing some twenty-two years later under its now former name, the Pittsburgh Collective. In 2010 Hugh began playing regularly with the group, which already included nineteen brilliant and imaginative musicians, and has effected a far greater and more direct impact on its evolution.

Ragin’s musical homage to Bowie, a conduction that he directs himself, is the centerpiece in this collection of eight works composed and arranged over the last eighteen years. While they differ in genre and approach, they interconnect and elide as “spillage”, or, per Gustav Mahler, as components of a world and embracing everything. Or, maybe by extension, as Lester Bowie himself said of the AACM, “...it’s life itself that this is about”.

SAXOPHONES

Ted Levine and Kelley Hart-Jenkins - alto saxophones
Anna Webber (tracks 1, 2, 7, 8), Marc Phaneuf (tracks 3-6) and Geoff Vidal - tenor saxophones
Brad Hubbard - baritone saxophone

BRASS

Brad Goode (tracks 1-7), Tony Kadleck (track 8), Tim Leopold, Wayne J. du Maine, Thomas Bergeron and Hugh Ragin - trumpets
Mike Christianson, Jim Messbauer, Ben Herrington (tracks 1, 2, 4, 6-8) and Mike Seltzer (tracks 3, 5) - tenor trombones
Steven Gehring - bass trombone
Raymond Stewart - tuba

RHYTHM SECTION

Dave Fabris - electric guitar
Geoff Burleson - piano
Dave Phillips - electric and acoustic bass
Mark Raynes - drums
Theo Moore - percussion

CONDUCTORS

David Sanford (tracks 1-4 and 6-8)
and Hugh Ragin (track 5)

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Executive Producer: Dave Douglas
Produced by Tom Lazarus and David Sanford

Recorded June 6-7, 2016 at Sear Sound, New York, NY
Recorded and mixed by Tom Lazarus
Assisted by Owen Mulholland and Jeff Citron
Mastered by Joe Lambert at Joe Lambert Mastering

Cover painting by Chris Pouler
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